

SONY

December 1, 2003

FILED ELECTRONICALLY

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Ex Parte Presentation in MB Docket No. 03-15, "Second Periodic Review of the Commission's Rules and Policies Affecting the Conversion to Digital Television" and CS Docket No. 98-120, "Carriage of Digital Television Broadcast Signals"

Dear Secretary Dortch:

This letter is to notify you that on November 21, 2003, representatives of Sony Electronics Inc. ("Sony Electronics") made an *ex parte* presentation to Commission staff regarding the above referenced proceedings. The presentation occurred at the end of a technical tutorial for Media Bureau staff on the subject of digital television ("DTV") standards.

The participants in the meeting were Mark Eyer, Director, Technology Standards, Sony Electronics; John Godfrey, Senior Manager, Government Affairs, Sony Electronics (the undersigned); and the following Commission staff (with the Media Bureau unless otherwise noted): Ben Bartolome, Steve Broeckert, Rick Chesson, Peter Corea, Stacy Fuller (Office of Comm. Administration), John Gabrysch, Gordon Godfrey, Eloise Gore, Alison Greenwald, Thomas Horan, Danielle Jafari, Jamilla Bess-Johnson, William Johnson, Walid Kassem, John Kiefer, Mike Lance, Keith Larson, Priscilla Lee, Wayne T. McKee, Neal McNeil (Office of Engineering and Technology), Kim Matthews, Susan Mort, Mary Beth Murphy, Nai Tam, and John Wong.

In summary, Sony Electronics supports the many other parties who have advocated that the Commission adopt the Advanced Television Systems Committee ("ATSC") standard A/53B as a technical requirement for DTV broadcasting. In addition, Sony Electronics agrees with the comments of the Consumer Electronics Association in the DTV Second Periodic Review stating that the Commission should also make Amendment 1 to the A/53B standard, describing Active Format Description ("AFD"), mandatory for U.S. DTV broadcasting. The Commission should determine an appropriate phase-in period for implementing AFD in order to minimize any burden on broadcasters for updating their digital broadcast equipment (potentially through software upgrade) to incorporate the AFD functionality.

The attached presentation slides explain how AFD indicates to the consumer's digital receiver the size and dimensions of the active video area of DTV content (typically, either 4:3 or 16:9). This enables the receiver to automatically display the content in a

manner appropriate to the consumer's display device. Currently, consumers often are confronted with situations in which DTV broadcast content is displayed inappropriately with both "pillar bars" on the left and right side of the screen and "letterbox" bands across the top and bottom, resulting in a smaller "postage stamp" image in the middle of the screen. The resulting consumer confusion is a detriment to the DTV service. Commission action on this technical issue will ensure that the framework is put into place to alleviate this problem and remove a potential obstacle to the digital TV transition.

In accordance with Section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, one copy of this notice is being filed electronically.

Sincerely,

<signed>

John Godfrey
Senior Manager, Government Affairs
Sony Electronics Inc.
(202) 429-3651

Enclosure

CC:

Ben Bartolome, Media Bureau
Steve Broeckert, Media Bureau
Rick Chessen, Media Bureau
Peter Corea, Media Bureau
Stacy Fuller, Office of Commissioner Kathleen Abernathy
John Gabrysch, Media Bureau
Gordon Godfrey, Media Bureau
Eloise Gore, Media Bureau
Alison Greenwald, Media Bureau
Thomas Horan, Media Bureau
Danielle Jafari, Media Bureau
Jamilla Bess-Johnson, Media Bureau
William Johnson, Media Bureau
Walid Kassem, Media Bureau
John Kiefer, Media Bureau
Mike Lance, Media Bureau
Keith Larson, Media Bureau
Priscilla Lee, Media Bureau
Wayne T. McKee, Media Bureau
Neal McNeil, Office of Engineering and Technology
Kim Matthews, Media Bureau
Susan Mort, Media Bureau
Mary Beth Murphy, Media Bureau
Nai Tam, Media Bureau
John Wong, Media Bureau